

Safety Bulletin



Lightning, Your Biggest Weather Risk SB04-001

Approximately, 360,000 bolts of lightning strike the earth every hour. It can be devastating, spectacular, and unpredictable. Unfortunately more than 600 persons in the U.S. are killed each year by lightning. Following these basic safety rules will help save your life.

1. Stay indoors, do not attempt to venture outside unless absolutely necessary.
2. Stay away from open doors or windows, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, metal pipes, sinks, and plug-in electrical equipment such as radios and televisions.
3. Do not take a shower or bath. Water and copper tubing are excellent conductors of electricity.
4. Do not use a hard-wired phone unless necessary.

If you must go outdoors, use the following precautions:

1. Do not work on fences, telephone lines, pipelines, or structural steel fabrications.
2. Do not use metal objects such as fishing rods or golf clubs.
3. Do not handle flammable materials in open containers.
4. Get out of water and off of beaches (do not continue to swim). Get off of small boats.
5. Stay in your automobile if traveling. Automobiles offer good protection as long as your radio is off and the antenna is down.
6. Seek shelter in a building. If no building is available, your best protection is to find the lowest area available. Never take shelter under a single tree in an open field.
7. Never touch downed power lines. Dial 911 or the local power company immediately to ensure that the line is turned off.

Final Tips

- ❖ Have a lightning plan.
- ❖ Suspend activities for 30 minutes after last observed strike.
- ❖ Injured persons do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely.